

Dear Anne,

Hope you are well and able to find some rest during the recess.

I wanted to get in touch with your proposal for organ donation. As you might know the Churches are totally behind organ donation, we even have a campaign run in partnership with NHS Blood and Transplant aimed at congregations and church members, to increase organ donor registration and blood donation. It's called Flesh+Blood, they have a snappy website at <http://fleshandblood.org/>

I have also been following closely the progress of the situation in the National Assembly for Wales with my counterpart there, Geraint Hopkins, who works for Cytûn – Churches Together in Wales. I am not sure if you know, but in Wales a number of churches were against the change from opt in to opt out; as far as I can tell this was primarily down to how they wanted society to place a value on the 'giving' side of organ donation – an issue which is ethical, moral as well as spiritual. So it wasn't that they were against donating organs – far from it, I think churches are some of the strongest cheerleaders – rather it was the principle of donation raised concerns for them. But it is a difficult position to adopt when the potential for lives to be saved is so great.

Anyway, I thought I'd let you know that your consultation has certainly generated positive and constructive interest within the Churches and am sure many of them will respond to your proposals in due course – at this stage I don't know which way they will go, many of them will be autonomous from their counterparts in Wales and so they may well come up with a different position – on the other hand there is a great deal to be said for solidarity, especially as in Wales I think they had much longer to consider and discuss following various Government consultations.

Finally, I was wondering if you might have any time during the August sitting weeks for a short meeting with myself, to discuss this but also some of the other work that is on my agenda at the moment. I am currently in a maternity cover role for this post and am keen to make as many positive contacts for my colleague, Chloe Clemmons, who is away until January. If you are able and willing to meet, please do get in touch and I'd be very happy to come down to Holyrood to see you at your convenience.